

Late Lunch, UXOs and No IEDs

By Spc. Andy Miller
122nd MPAD

CAMP STRIKER, Baghdad -- Capt. Matt Schoenfeldt, the Colt platoon leader for Fox Battery, 3rd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, was commenting on the chicken wings as he walked out of the Camp Striker dining facility Dec. 14. Today there were several flavors available, instead of the usual just one, he said.

He didn't have a chance to try the spicy or teriyaki though.

That's because as he was about to sit down, a call came in on the radio he carries with him when his platoon is on explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) escort duty. Moments later, the Colts were en route to rendezvous with one of Baghdad's EOD teams.

"EOD is a pretty [high level] target," Schoenfeldt said. "[The enemy] understands those are the guys who go out and defuse the [improvised explosive devices]."

When EOD gets called out for a disposal mission, Schoenfeldt's platoon is right there with them, from the moment they leave the gate, to the resulting ordnance disposal. His squads take turns running 24-hour EOD escort shifts.

"Once EOD lands in sector... they're pretty busy doing their job," explained Sgt. Rafael Berastain, the Colt platoon's 1st squad leader. "They don't have time to be looking around, looking for enemies. We are the ones protecting them while they are doing



Spc. Joseph Werner, a fire support specialist with 3rd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, pulls security at the site of unexploded ordnance in Baghdad.



Photos by Spc. Andy Miller, 122nd MPAD

Sgt. Christopher Millward (right) and Spc. John Williams (center), both explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) technicians with the 788th Explosive Ordnance Company, from Fort McCoy, Wis., discuss a detonation charge that was found by Spc. Joseph Werner, a fire support specialist with Colt platoon of 3rd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, during a Dec. 14 mission in Baghdad.

their job." The mission has put the Colt platoon Soldiers in the path of insurgents more than once during their two months on the job. A job they were assigned when their entire 2nd Brigade Combat Team of the 1st Cavalry Division was extended for several months beyond its original return date.

The danger of Baghdad's streets is nothing new the Colt platoon, which has been acting as the brigade's quick-reaction force and convoy security force, in addition to conducting patrols, raids and other missions, since they arrived to Baghdad last February. As a wheeled-vehicle fire support element, the Colts are used to training and working together as a small team, according to Schoenfeldt.

"For us it really hasn't been too much of a stretch, because the Colts... they're designed to work in small teams anyway," Schoenfeldt said. "So small unit tactics, these guys took over real

quickly."

The EOD escort mission is another variation of what the Colts have been doing all year. It's just that instead of trying to avoid IEDs, now the Colts go looking for them.

"It's better that we find it and nobody gets hurt, than somebody else finds it the wrong way," Berastain said. "So I don't mind going out there and looking for them. I don't mind at all."

The Dec. 14 mission they missed lunch for turned out to be for an already defused piece of unexploded ordnance (UXO).

Spc. John Williams, an EOD Soldier with the 788th EOD Company from Fort McCoy, Wis., said all their calls are important, even when they don't find an IED or UXO.

"It's better to be safe than sorry," Williams said. "We run a lot of hoaxes, a lot of trash, but some of the things that we run into I would think were something."

Soldiers Deliver Medical Supplies to Sadr City Hospital

By Spc. Jan Critchfield
122nd MPAD

FORWARD OPERATING BASE HOPE, Baghdad -- In an effort to improve relations with the citizens of the Sadr City area, Soldiers of Charlie Company, 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division delivered some essential medical supplies to a local hospital Dec. 13.

"Today we delivered medical supplies for an emergency room at the Al-Qadissyaia hospital," Company C commander Capt. Troy Denomy said, "This donation serves two purposes ... it fulfills a promise we made to the hospital, and it shows the good will of the American people."

The much-needed supplies delivered included four electrocardiograph machines, seven oxygen canisters, two oxygen regulators, two anesthesia machines, six CPR assistance bags, and other assorted life-saving equipment that totaled roughly around \$50,000.

These types of donations are "absolutely critical in Sadr City," Denomy said, "We spoke with the hospital staff, and these are the types of things they said they need."

The supplies were bought and shipped to Iraq by a non-profit organization in the United States.

They are bound to help the doctors at Al-Qadissyaia hospital save lives, according to the hospital's director, who asked not to be named for security.

"Because of the bad condition in our country, we have a deficiency in certain items ... especially in the [electrocardiograph] machines and



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Soldiers of Company C, 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division unload supplies at a hospital in Baghdad's Sadr City neighborhood.

machines for anesthesia," the director said. "Because we have good relations and connection with the [multinational] forces ... they ask about our needs."

"We are very lucky to receive good things from the [multinational] forces because we are in real need," the hospital's director said. "[Electrocardiograph] machines are very important to our work for cardiology ... and very serious conditions. We have an old machine, but these machines are very new. These new machines are going to help us save lives," the director said.

Predominately a focus of the U.S. Army's combat power due to a recurring insurgency, the current time of relative peace has allowed TF 2-5 Cav. to shift much of their focus in Sadr City to reconstruction of hospitals, clinics and schools along with other civil military operations to help the local Iraqis.

"We visit this hospital at least twice a month to see how they're doing," Denomy said, "It's always good to do something good for the [Iraqi] people. Any time you can put a smile on someone's face is a good day."

Useful Iraqi Words/Phrases

Where can I find a doctor?

ayn ajid duktoor?

Thursday

High: 64

Low: 38



Friday

High: 61

Low: 40



Saturday

High: 59

Low: 41



Weather information provided by 1CD Staff Weather Office (SWO)

Commanding General: Maj. Gen. Peter Chiarelli

Public Affairs Officer: Lt. Col. James Hutton

122nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment Cmdr.: Maj. John Fuhrman

Public Affairs Supervisor: Master Sgt. Dave Larsen

1st Sgt. 122nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment: 1st Sgt. William Kuhns

Editor: Spc. Marie Whitney

Staff Writers: Staff Sgt. Susan German, Staff Sgt. Rebekah-mae Bruns, Sgt. Dan Purcell, Sgt. Christina Rockhill, Cpl. Benjamin Cossel, Cpl. Bill

Putnam, Spc. Jan Critchfield, Spc. Andy Miller, Spc. Erik LeDrew, Spc. Al Barrus, Spc. Erin Robicheaux Pfc. Brian Schroeder, Pfc. Matthew McLaughlin.

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News Notes

"Your Call is Very Important to us"

BEIJING (Reuters) -- Nine out of 10 Chinese calling into a suicide-prevention hotline in the capital Beijing are getting the busy tone, a newspaper said recently, adding that nationwide four people were killing themselves every minute. Poverty, unemployment, bereavement, breakdowns in relationships or legal and work-related problems are all said to be causes. But a lack of funds meant that not everyone who needed the hotline was getting through, said Michael Phillips, executive director of the suicide prevention center. Stress in urban China has increased with economic reforms, increased competition, job losses, breakup of the traditional family unit in the cities and the dismantlement of cradle-to-grave welfare benefits.

"Mr. Plastic" Owns 1,000 Credit Cards

PISMO BEACH, Calif. (AP) -- The man known as "Mr. Plastic Fantastic" has great credit. So great, in fact, that it takes a wallet nearly as long as a football field to carry his credit cards. Walter Cavanagh owns 1,497 valid credit cards (he assumes a card is valid until he hears otherwise) with a potential credit line of about \$1.7 million. The retired real estate broker, who lives in the small San Luis Obispo County community of Shell Beach, said his collecting began with a bet more than three decades ago.

Local Youth Helped by Elves

TEMPLE, Texas (Temple Daily Telegram) -- Thanks to the "Rescue Elves" of Temple Fire and Rescue, youngsters in Temple who might not have had a Christmas this year will wake up Christmas morning with lots of presents to open.

The elves, Marcia Wesson and Danna King, are in charge this year of the Rescue Elves toy distribution event put on annually by Temple Fire and Rescue. The program is designed to provide Christmas gifts for children in families that otherwise would not be able to afford gifts.

Gwen Harris of Temple, mother of Preston Harris, 10, and John Harris, 11, arrived at the central fire station Monday to pick up gifts for her boys. "I think it is great," she said. "I'm a single parent and I go to school," she said.

A first-time participant



Temple Daily Telegram

Marcia Wesson (left) and Danna King maneuver bicycles in the hallway of the Temple Fire and Rescue central station Monday as part of the Rescue Elves program.

in the program, she attends McLennan Community College and is only two semesters away from becoming a registered nurse.

Temple Fire and Rescue Chief Lonzo Wallace praised


his "elves" for the work they had done this year.

"They were really out there hustling for those kids," he said of their efforts to gather donations of money and gifts this year.

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Eagles at a Loss Without Injured T.O.

PHILADELPHIA (AP) -- Terrell Owens invigorated the Philadelphia Eagles with his attitude, enthusiasm and MVP-type performance.

Donovan McNabb and Brian Westbrook will do their best to prove this wasn't a one-man offense.

A badly sprained ankle and broken leg will sideline Owens for the rest of the regular season and possibly the entire postseason - a devastating blow for a team that dominated the NFC and clinched home-field advantage throughout the playoffs with two games left.

But take heart, Philly fans: losing the brash-talking, playmaking wide receiver doesn't end the Eagles' chances of reaching the Super Bowl for the first time in 24 years.

The Eagles still have McNabb and Westbrook on offense, and Jevon Kearse leads the stingiest defense in the NFL. No team has allowed fewer points.

"They will be fine," said Owens, who has an outside chance of playing in the Super Bowl if the Eagles make it. "It doesn't stop with me."

"I don't think it is any step back too much with T.O. not being in there," McNabb said. "With those guys in there, we are still running our offense and those guys will have opportunities to make plays for us."

With Owens, the Eagles won their first nine games by double-digit margins, including five games by more than 20 points each.

Without him, they have to win two playoffs games against inferior teams in a weak conference to reach the Super Bowl.

"We'll make do without him, obviously, and the guys will step up and play," coach Andy Reid said.



Reuters

Philadelphia Eagles wide receiver Terrell Owens limps off the field during the third quarter against the Dallas Cowboys, December 19. He suffered a broken leg and will undergo surgery, forcing him to miss the rest of the regular season.



Reuters

Jacksonville Jaguars safety Donovan Darius was fined \$75,000 for a forearm across the neck that left Green Bay's Robert Ferguson temporarily paralyzed.

Darius Fined \$75 Thousand for Paralyzing Hit on Packer

NEW YORK (AP) -- Jacksonville safety Donovan Darius was fined \$75,000 by the NFL Tuesday for a hit across the neck of Green Bay's Robert Ferguson that left the wide receiver temporarily paralyzed.

Darius, who was ejected from the game, wasn't suspended because league disciplinarian Gene Washington noted that this was the first time he had been fined for a violation.

The hit came in the fourth quarter of Jacksonville's 28-25 win over the Packers.

Ferguson caught a pass over the middle, and Darius hit him across the helmet and neck with a forearm.

Ferguson lay on the ground and was taken off the field, regaining feeling in his legs later, after he was hospitalized. He remained in the hospital Sunday and Monday nights.

Darius said in a statement that he spoke with Ferguson on Monday in the hospital.

"We had a good conversation in which he told me he has no hard feelings," Darius said. "We agreed that it was a part of the game. The most important thing is that Robert is OK."

"You violently and unnecessarily struck your opponent in the neck and head area with your forearm," Washington said in his letter to Darius.

In Brief

Alley to Appear in Weight Loss Ads

NEW YORK (AP) -- "Fat Actress" star Kirstie Alley has signed a deal to appear in ads for the Jenny Craig weight-management program. Alley, who has said she wants to lose the weight that prompted her new Showtime series, will star in Jenny Craig Inc.'s 2005 advertising campaign. The TV commercials will begin airing Jan. 10, the Carlsbad, Calif.-based company announced Monday. Terms of the deal weren't disclosed. "I had a great time getting fat and now I'm going to have an even greater time losing weight," Alley, 53, said in a statement.



Penn, Teller Host X-mas Blood Drive

LOS ANGELES (AP) -- Magicians Penn & Teller have conjured up a second annual blood drive they've tagged "Dreaming of a Red Christmas." The pair will donate two tickets to their show at the Rio hotel and casino to anyone who donates blood through Jan. 1, they told a news conference this week at United Blood Services in Las Vegas. "We know that the holidays are a hard time for UBS and blood (supplies) are low, so we thought it was the least we could," said Penn Jillette, speaking for silent partner Penn. "You donate blood, you save a life and you get to see our stupid show," Jillette joked.